

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) In a network environment that includes a trusted network, an intranet and an external network, and a lobby server that intercedes to allow external computing systems to be scrutinized before being ~~admitted~~ joined to a data conference with one or more intranet computing systems, a method for the lobby server establishing a data conference between one or more intranet computing systems and one or more external computing systems, the method comprising the following:

an act of a lobby server receiving a request to establish a data conference from a conference organizing computing system in the intranet;

an act of determining that the conference organizing computing system is authorized to establish the data conference;

an act of establishing a lobby ~~that may be joined by potential participating computing systems in the external network~~, the lobby being an object or group of objects ~~that permits authorization of to which~~ potential participating computing systems in the external ~~without directly allowing access to the subject data of network that are awaiting authorization to join the data conference~~ may be admitted;

an act of receiving a request to join the ~~lobby or~~ data conference from at least one of the potential participating computing systems in the external network;

an act of ~~joining~~ admitting the at least one of the potential participating computing systems to the lobby;

an act of notifying the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system has requested ~~access to~~ join the data conference;

an act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference; and

an act of joining the at least one potential participating computing system to the data conference.

2. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 1, further comprising the following prior to the act of ~~joining~~admitting the at least one potential participating computing system to the lobby:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized~~allowed to ~~join~~be admitted to the lobby.

3. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 2, wherein the act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized~~allowed to ~~join~~be admitted to the lobby comprises the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a conference identifier corresponding to the data conference.

4. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 3, wherein the act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized~~allowed to ~~join~~be admitted to the lobby further comprises the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a password corresponding to the data conference.

5. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 2, wherein the act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized~~allowed to ~~join~~be admitted to the lobby comprises the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a password corresponding to the data conference.

6. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference comprises the following:

an act of receiving an indication from the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

7. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 6, further comprising the following:

an act of facilitating communication between the conference organizing computing system and the at least one potential computing system in order to determine whether the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

8. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference comprises the following:

an act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system other than the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

9. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 8, further comprising the following:

an act of facilitating communication between the intranet computing system and the at least one potential computing system in order to determine whether the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

10. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product-readable storage medium~~ for use in a network environment that includes a trusted network, an intranet and an external network, and a lobby server that intercedes to allow external computing systems to be scrutinized before being ~~admitted-joined~~ to a data conference with one or more intranet computing systems, the computer ~~program-product-readable storage medium~~ comprising ~~one or more computer-readable media having thereon~~ computer-executable instructions that, when executed by one or more processors at the lobby server, cause the lobby server to perform a method for the lobby server establishing a data conference between one or more intranet computing systems and one or more external computing systems, the method comprising the following:

- an act of a lobby server receiving a request to establish a data conference from a conference organizing computing system in the intranet;
- an act of determining that the conference organizing computing system is authorized to establish the data conference;
- an act of establishing a lobby ~~that may be joined by potential participating computing systems in the external network~~, the lobby being an object or group of objects ~~that permits authorization of to which~~ potential participating computing systems in the external network ~~without directly allowing access to the subject data of that are awaiting authorization to join~~ may be admitted;
- an act of receiving a request to join the lobby ~~or data conference~~ from at least one of the potential participating computing systems in the external network;
- an act of ~~joining-admitting~~ the at least one of the potential participating computing systems to the lobby;
- an act of notifying the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system has requested ~~access to~~ join the data conference;

- an act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference; and
- an act of joining the at least one potential participating computing system to the data conference.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 11-10, wherein the ~~one or more computer-readable media are~~ computer readable storage medium is system memory.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 11-10, wherein the ~~one or more computer-readable media are~~ computer readable storage medium is persistent memory.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 10, wherein the ~~one or more computer-readable media~~ computer readable storage medium further ~~have~~ has thereon computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

- an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized-allowed to ~~join-be admitted to~~ the lobby prior to the act of joining admitting the at least one potential participating computing system to the lobby.

15. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 14, wherein the computer-executable instructions for performing the act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is

~~authorized-allowed to join-be admitted to~~ the lobby comprise computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a conference identifier corresponding to the data conference.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product-readable storage medium~~ in accordance with Claim 15, wherein the computer-executable instructions for determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized-allowed to join be admitted to~~ the lobby further comprise computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a password corresponding to the data conference.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product-readable storage medium~~ in accordance with Claim 14, wherein the computer-executable instructions for determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is ~~authorized-allowed to join be admitted to~~ the lobby comprise computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system has properly provided a password corresponding to the data conference.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 10, wherein the computer-executable instructions for receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference comprise computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of receiving an indication from the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the ~~computer-readable media~~ computer readable storage medium further has thereon computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of facilitating communication between the conference organizing computing system and the at least one potential computing system in order to determine whether the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program-product~~ readable storage medium in accordance with Claim 10, wherein the computer-executable instructions for receiving an indication from an intranet computing system that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to join the data conference comprise computer-executable instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the lobby server to perform the following:

an act of receiving an indication from an intranet computing system other than the conference organizing computing system that the at least one potential computing system is authorized to join the data conference.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) In a network environment that includes a trusted network, an intranet and an external network, and a lobby server that intercedes to allow external computing systems to be scrutinized before being admitted-joined to a data conference with one or more intranet computing systems, a method for a conference organizing computing system in the intranet organizing a data conference to which one or more external computing systems may join, the method comprising the following:

an act of the conference organizing computing system generating a request to establish a data conference;

an act of transmitting the request such that at least a derivative of the request is received by the lobby server;

an act of receiving a notification from the lobby server that at least one potential participating computing system in the external network has joined-been admitted to a lobby associated with the data conference, the lobby being an object or group of objects that permits authorization of to which potential participating computing systems in the external network without directly allowing access to the subject data of that are awaiting authorization to join the data conference may be admitted; and

an act of transmitting an authorization such that at least a derivative of the authorization is received by the lobby server, the authorization indicating that the at least one potential participating computing system currently admitted to the lobby is authorized to join the data conference.

24. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 23, further comprising the following:

an act of receiving a notification that the at least one potential participating computing system has joined the data conference.

25. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 23, further comprising the following:

an act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to attend the data conference prior to the act of transmitting the authorization.

26. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 25, wherein the act of determining that the at least one potential participating computing system is authorized to attend the data conference comprises the following:

an act of challenging the at least one potential participating computing system such that the at least one potential participating computing system may successfully achieve the challenge if they are on an invitation list.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program product~~ readable storage medium comprising ~~one or more computer-readable media having thereon computer-executable instructions that, when executed by one or more processors at the conference organizing computing system, cause the conference organizing computing system to perform the method recited in Claim 23.~~

28. (Currently Amended) In a network environment that includes a trusted network, an intranet and an external network, and a lobby server that intercedes to allow external computing systems to be scrutinized before being ~~admitted~~ joined to a data conference with one or more intranet computing systems, a method for an external

computing system to gain access to a data conference established by a conference organizing computing system in the intranet, the method comprising the following:

an act of an external computing system receiving an invitation to join a lobby hosted by the lobby server, the lobby being an object or group of objects that permits authorization of potential participating computing systems in the external network without directly allowing access to the subject data of the data conference;

an act of generating a request to join the lobby data conference;

an act of transmitting the request to join the lobby data conference to the lobby server; and

an act of receiving an indication that the external computing system has successfully joined the data conference been admitted to a lobby, the lobby being an object or group of objects to which potential participating computing systems in the external network that are awaiting authorization to join the data conference may be admitted;

an act of receiving an indication that the external computing system has successfully joined the data conference.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 28, further comprising the following:

~~an act of generating a request to join the data conference; and~~

an act of transmitting the request to join the data conference to the data conference.

31. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 28, further comprising the following:

an act of the external computing system participating in the data conference.

32. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with Claim 28, further comprising the following:

an act of transmitting credentials necessary to join ~~be~~ admitted to the lobby to the lobby server.

33. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 32, further comprising the following:

an act of transmitting credentials necessary to join the data conference to the lobby server.

34. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 28, further comprising the following:

an act of transmitting credentials necessary to join the data conference to the lobby server.

35. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~program product~~ readable storage medium comprising ~~one or more computer-readable media having thereon~~ computer-executable instructions that, when executed by one or more processors at the conference organizing computing system, cause the conference organizing computing system to perform the method recited in Claim 28.